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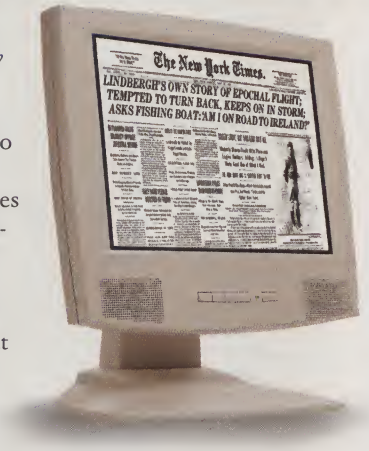
Old Newspapers Newly Digital


The New York Times.
LINDBERGH'S OWN STORY OF EPOCHAL FLIGHT;
TEMPTED TO TURN BACK, KEEPS ON IN STORM;
ASKS FISHING BOAT: AM I ON ROAD TO IRELAND?

Looking for the April 21, 1861, edition of *The New York Times?* Using a new digital database from **Bell & Howell,** you'll soon be able to see a copy at your local library—along with back issues of hundreds of other newspapers dating back to the 19th century.

Bell & Howell's ProQuest Historical Newspapers project aims to convert old newspapers to digital form, starting with *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal,* but eventually expanding to other regional, national, and international papers. Users will be able to search content by keyword, date, author, and article type. Alternately, they will be able to browse back issues, including articles, photos, graphics, and advertisements, all in the same format as the original publication. The database will be sold on a subscription basis to libraries, but will be free to library patrons.

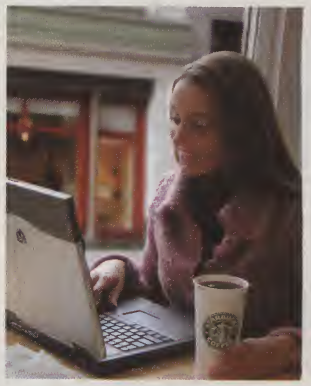
The database isn't intended as a replacement for original newspapers and microfilm, however. "They are likely to be used in very different ways, just as a printed book and an audio recording of a book are used differently but have the same content," says ProQuest spokeswoman Tina Creguer.

It's a useful project, but it's not without its detractors. Nicholson Baker, fiction author, founder of the American Newspaper Repository, and outspoken opponent of replacing printed publications with virtual facsimiles, says that because the ProQuest archive will digitize existing microfilm archives, the results won't be a faithful reproduction of a historical newspaper.

"ProQuest is an attempt to do the best you can with what remains, but in many cases the only thing that remains of the original papers is middling-quality microfilm," Baker says. He adds that aside from quality, microfilm has two fatal flaws: Most of it is in black and white (many old papers were in color), and it doesn't translate gray-scale images well. "People don't realize how opulent papers were before radio," Baker says. "They were visually arresting, colorful, and strange." *—Elaine X. Grant*

The Java Network

Walk into a **Starbucks** and, beginning this spring, you'll be able to get some T1 with your tea, some broadband with your Sumatra. Starbucks plans to provide its coffeehouse customers with wireless Internet access that will be accessible from laptops and PDAs.


Getting wired while networking wirelessly

Customers will be able to surf the Web, send e-mail, and access corporate intranets using any IEEE 802.11b- or OpenAir-compatible device over the **MobileStar** ***(www.mobilestar.com)*** wireless network.

Access can be purchased on a one-time basis ($2.50 for 15 minutes, plus 10 cents for each additional minute), or on a subscription basis (from $15.95 a month for 200 minutes to $59.95 a month for unlimited access). Subscribers receive wireless access not just at Starbucks but also at any of the 140 MobileStar installations, which include American Airlines terminals and Admirals Clubs, and many Hilton hotels.

Additionally, Starbucks will offer a free portal dubbed the Walled Garden that will serve up information on the local community, movies, and restaurants. Content for the regional portals will be created by the Microsoft Network.

While cybercafés are already a staple worldwide, unlike others Starbucks will be a bring-your-own-laptop affair. The stores will not provide computer terminals, though each location will be connected to the Net via a T1 line.

The company expects to roll out the wireless networking slowly, beginning with a few locations this spring, and eventually offering the service at 70 percent of its 2,500 North American stores. *—Kevin Savetz*

WHITHER WIRELESS?

What motivates technophiles to buy a wireless handheld? According to a survey conducted by Greenfield Online, consumers buying wireless devices plan to use them for:

62%	Sending and receiving e-mail
45%	Surfing the Internet
23%	Playing online games
12%	Trading stocks or checking stock quotes
9%	Planning a vacation
8%	Looking for a new job